Answers to Questions about Returning to School. Updated 1/22/2021

Is returning to school in person mandatory?

Returning to school in person is not mandatory. We are committed to providing a remote option throughout the pandemic.

What consequences have you considered for children who don't comply with your safety protocol?

Students, faculty, and families will all be required to sign a health and safety pledge. Students who do not comply with the safety protocols will not be allowed to participate in on-campus learning.

Trimester 3 starts on March 15. Why is hybrid not starting until April?

Trimester 2 ends on March 24th. March 25th and 26th are Evaluation Writing for faculty. Spring Break is March 29th - April 2nd. Trimester 3 begins on April 5th.

Is it certain the Hybrid schedule will alternate between Upper School weeks and Middle School weeks?

A Hybrid schedule (some days on campus, some days remote), which allows us to de-densify the campus and follow the necessary safety protocols, is extraordinarily complex. What we know is that we will not have both divisions on campus at the same time. We are finalizing a schedule that provides as much consistency and routine as possible.

What does on-campus activities mean?

The rotation of activities for February and March will be one grade level at a time and focus on social connection and learning the safety protocols. All other grades will be learning remotely when it is not their grade’s day to be on campus. Since some of our classes are mixed graded, it is likely that students will have some asynchronous classes on days when their teacher is engaged with their grade level team facilitating in-person activities. More details of these days will be shared soon.

Which teachers won’t be in-person at school?

It is not yet clear when the vaccine will be available for teachers. We are not going to ask anyone to return to campus before they feel it is safe to do so, based on their own
circumstances. It is likely students will have a combination of in-person classes and online classes. Classes that are held at school and taught by a teacher online will be supported by an Instructional Assistant.

**If teachers end up being vaccinated, what would be the reasoning for them to continue to not return to school for the rest of the year?**

There will still be health and family concerns for those of us who get vaccinated that may impact our ability to be on campus.

**Will teachers on campus be instructing students both in-person and virtually, at the same time?**

It is likely that teachers on campus will be instructing both in-person and virtually. It is also possible that some sections will be entirely online, and others entirely in person.

**How many students will be in each classroom?**

Each classroom has been evaluated for maximum occupancy to allow for appropriate physical distancing and ventilation. We will also use other spaces in the school for classes. We are working on the appropriate technology to equip these additional spaces for hybrid learning.

**Will you really keep kids in arts classes at school?**

We are still determining which classes will be taught at school and which will remain online.

**Why are your starting with US and why is your plan different than the guidelines?**

We are taking a stepwise return to campus so we can learn as we go and modify our practices as needed. Being on campus in a pandemic will be quite different than our “normal.” It will take time for us all to adjust to being together and following the necessary safety protocols. We are starting first with seniors and then working towards the younger students because seniors are the most familiar with the school. These optional, small-group gatherings will focus on social connection and safety protocols. There will be an online gathering for those who are participating from home. When we return to Hybrid Learning on Campus in Trimester 3, we will begin the rotation with Middle School. Students who are not participating in these grade-level days will attend remote school as normal.

**What guidelines are being used to determine the return to school? Are they changing?**
The guidelines and protocols for this pandemic are constantly changing. We are trying to balance the health and safety needs of all our constituencies. We know the isolation students and adults feel is profound. We know the risks of contracting Covid-19 are real and can be profound. We are trying to accommodate students and faculty who will benefit from a return to the campus, while also accommodating those who need to stay home.

**Will there be regular testing? If not, why?**

We are still investigating the efficacy of a regular testing protocol.

**Can you tell us how bathrooms will work?**

De-densifying the campus will greatly reduce the bathroom numbers. We will provide regular cleaning throughout the day, but not after every use. Toilets, sinks, and soap dispensers have all been changed to be touch free.

**Why is it necessary to sign into Microsoft to access the reopening page on the website?** The initial link was set incorrectly. It has been fixed.

**What outside experts are you utilizing?**

We convene a leadership group each week to plan our reopening. This group follows the State's K-12 School Guidance and the State's K-12 Decision Tree guidance. We follow the data dashboards provided by King County Public Health in our decision making. We are also consulting with area and national schools to share experiences and best practices.